

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, CS

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT: COSTA RICA

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF REPORT SUBMITTED BY DEPARTMENT TO
THE CONTRESS:

2. BEGIN TEXT: I. POLITICAL SITUATION - THE COSTA RICAN
FORM OF GOVERNMENT IS A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY. BESIDES
THE THREE TRADITIONAL INDEPENDENT BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT,
EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND JUDICIAL THERE EXISTS AN INDE-
PENDENT ELECTION TRIBUNAL WHICH ASSUMES CERTAIN REGULATORY
AND PUBLIC SECURITY FUNCTIONS EVERY FOUR YEARS DURING THE
ELECTION PERIOD. THE GOVERNMENT IS STABLE AND THE POLI-
TICAL CLIMATE IS TRANQUIL. COSTA RICA HAS NO ARMED SER-
VICES. PUBLIC SECURITY FUNCTIONS ARE ENTRUSTED TO TWO
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SEPARATE POLICE FORCES, THE RURAL GUARD AND THE CIVIL
GUARD.

3. II. LEGAL SITUATION - THE COSTA RICAN CONSTITUTION AC-
CURATELY REFLECTS THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE OF THE COSTA RICAN
GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TOWARD THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS.
THE CONSTITUTION CONTAINS TWENTY-NINE SEPARATE ARTICLES

ENUMERATING SPECIFIC RIGHTS. AMONG THOSE INCLUDED ARE: THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM, INVIOABILITY OF HUMAN LIFE (NO DEATH

PENALTY), FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, INVIOABILITY OF THE HOME, FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, EQUALITY UNDER LAW FOR EVERYONE, RIGHT TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT, GUARANTEES AGAINST CRUEL, DEGRADING OR PERPETUAL PUNISHMENT, FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, EQUALITY OF ALL MEN UNDER LAW (ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST HUMAN DIGNITY ARE PROHIBITED), GUARANTEE TO TRIAL ONLY BEFORE CONSTITUTIONALLY ESTABLISHED TRIBUNALS, A FIFTH AMENDMENT TYPE GUARANTEE, AND THE RIGHT OF HABEAS CORPUS. A CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION EXISTS FOR THE TEMPORARY (UP TO 30 DAYS) SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN ENUMERATED RIGHTS IN CASES OF OBVIOUS PUBLIC NECESSITY.

4. III. OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS. - THE OFFICIAL ATTITUDE OF THE COSTA RICAN GOVERNMENT TOWARD INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IS A POSITIVE ONE AND IS ENFORCED IN PRACTICE. COSTA RICANS ARE FULLY ABLE TO EXERCISE THE WIDE-RANGING RIGHTS WHICH ARE GUARANTEED IN THE CONSTITUTION.

THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AT HOME IS MATCHED BY ITS ACTIVE INTERNATIONAL ROLE IN HUMAN RIGHTS. COSTA RICA HOLDS A SEAT ON THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND IS AN ADVOCATE OF MORE EFFECTIVE, BALANCED AND NON-POLITICAL UN HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY.

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5. IV. OTHER REPORTING - THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL 1974 REPORT ON TORTURE STATED THAT THERE WERE NO ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE IN COSTA RICA. AMNESTY'S 1975-76 ANNUAL REPORT DOES NOT CONTAIN AN ENTRY ON COSTA RICA.

FREEDOM HOUSE LISTS COSTA RICA AS "FREE". END TEXT.
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